

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT: Polish Prisons

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SUPPLEMENT TO
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1. Out of the 2,500 inmates of the penal camp at Legionowo about 18 km north of Warsaw in May 1951, 1,700 were railwaymen, the remaining 800 being Volks-deutsche not yet "rehabilitated". The two groups are kept separate from one another.* The camp, which covers an area of 3 sq. km. and is surrounded by a wooden fence with electrified wires, is run by U.S. prison personnel (straz wiesienna U.B.) numbering about 250. Each of the three entrances to the camp is permanently guarded by two armed guards. The camp is also protected by police dogs.
2. Every prisoner is issued a drill suit with a number on the sleeve and, in winter, a warmer pair of trousers and a padded coat (fufajka), gloves and woolen underwear from Czechoslovakia. The railwaymen are employed on jobs connected with the railways, such as reconstruction and extension of railway workshops, and on sewage works and the removal of rubble in the Praga and Rembertow quarters of Warsaw. They are taken to their place of work in trucks or, if the job is nearby, they are marched there.
3. Work is carried on every day including Sundays and public holidays. The only occasion for time off is when a man is permitted to see the doctor, take a bath and change underwear. Outside the camp 9½ hours of work a day are required and 12 hours a day inside the camp. Working parties outside the camp number 15 men under the escort of 3 guards. Mortality from exhaustion is high, sometimes as many as 20 a month, and there have also been some cases of suicide. Prisoners are not allowed to receive letters or parcels until they have been in the camp 6 months, and even then only if their behaviour has been good. Letters are censored and the number of letters a prisoner may write is limited.
4. The food is very poor, breakfast consisting of "Ersatz" coffee and 500 gr. of bread (which has to last the whole day). Lunch and supper consist of a liter of thick soup with haricot beans and cabbage occasionally containing a few bits of meat. Reveille is at 5:30 AM, breakfast at 6:00 AM, dinner at midday, roll call at 6:30 PM and lights-out at 9:00 PM.

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50X1-HUM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

-2-

5. The camp Commandant is a U.B. officer of unknown rank, Jan Flitz, who arrives at the camp every day by car from his quarters in Warsaw, ul. Marszalkowska 172.*** He is very brutal to his prisoners, whom he frequently beats and kicks. U.B. Lieut. (fnu) Jagielski who is responsible for the allocation of work is, on the other hand, more humane in his treatment of prisoners. U.B. 2nd Lieut. (fnu) Lutowski, the mess officer, walks about with a riding crop with which he beats prisoners; he frequently prevents them from finishing their meals. The guards evidently take their cue from Flitz and Lutowski in their treatment of prisoners, which is for the most part brutal in the extreme.
6. There are about 15,000 prisoners detained at Goleniow near Szczecin (054/Q55), most of whom are political prisoners or unsuccessful escapees serving one year and up. One (fnu) Sieniaszek is the political officer and (fnu) Bonachiewicz is in charge of the prison guards of which there are approximately 200 or slightly more; [redacted] The prison blocks 50X1-HUM are in brick buildings, while the prison is surrounded by a wall and barbed wire. The inmates labor at clearing rubble in the city, to which they are marched under escort.
7. About 1,900 prisoners, approximately 400 of whom are women, are held in the forced labor camp at Mieleczin located nine kilometers from Wloclawek (Q53/J73) and occupying an area of 1½ square kilometers. Although the prisoners' daily ration is only 600 grams of bread with coffee for breakfast and soup for lunch and supper, they are forced to work 10 hours a day minimum, and longer if they have not fulfilled the norm until it is achieved.*** A doctor visits the camp at infrequent intervals, but the sanitary conditions are deplorable. The inmates are not permitted to receive packages from relatives except on May Day.

50X1-HUM

* [redacted] Comment: [redacted] the Legionowo camp contains about 3,000 inmates, "many of whom are railway men"; date of information prior to 17 December 1951.

** [redacted] Comment: Plac Zabawiciela [redacted]

*** [redacted] Comment: These prisoners are legally required to perform only 8 hours of work, but this limit is never observed.

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